

Atty Docket No. 705397.15

Serial No. 09/295,935

Independent Claims

1. (Previously Presented) A method of supervising personal exposure to a consumer electronics device having a V-chip, the method comprising:

receiving a program signal suitable for conversion by the consumer electronics device into user discernible information;

receiving a content-based indicator indicative of the content of the user discernible information and timing information indicative of a reference time;

selecting a content-based specification and a first finite time range specification associated with the selected content-based specification;

comparing the first finite time range specification with the reference time;

allowing user review of user discernible information without user input or comparison of received content-based indicator with a content-based specification if the reference time is outside the first finite time range specification;

comparing the selected content-based specification with the received content-based indicator when the reference time falls within the first finite time range specification; and

impairing the program signal if the received content-based indicator exceeds the content-based specification.

13. (Previously Presented) A method of supervising the exposure to a consumer electronics device having a V-chip, the method comprising:

receiving a program signal suitable for conversion by the consumer electronics device into user discernible information;

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receiving a content-based rating indicative of the content of the user discernible information;

receiving a timing signal indicative of a reference time;

selecting one or more finite time range specifications,

selecting a content-based rating specification for each of the one or more finite time range specifications, wherein a content based rating specification is associated with each of the one or more content-based rating;

comparing the one or more finite time range specifications with the reference time;

allowing user review of user discernible information without user input or comparison of received content-based indicator with a content-based specification if the reference time is outside the first finite time range specification;

comparing the received content-based rating when the reference time falls within a finite time range specification of the one or more finite time range specifications with the content-based specification associated with the finite time range specification; and

impairing the program signal if the received content-based rating exceeds the content-based rating associated with the finite time range specification.

19. (Previously Presented) A recordable medium for a consumer electronics device having a V-chip comprising:

a computer program comprising steps for:

receiving timing information indicative of a reference time and a content-based indicator indicative of the content of the user discernible information into

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which a program signal received by the consumer electronics device is converted;

selecting a content-based rating and a finite time range specification

associated with the selected content-based specification;

comparing a finite time range specification with the reference time;

disabling the V-chip without user input if the reference time is outside the finite time range specification;

comparing the selected content-based specification with the received content-based indicator when the reference time falls within the finite time range specification; and

generating a control signal based on the comparison between the selected content-based specification and the received content-based indicator.

25. (Previously Presented) A consumer electronics device having a V-chip for supervising personal exposure to user discernible information, comprising:

a non-volatile memory configured to store a first finite time range specification and a first content-based specification associated with the first finite time range specification;

a logic unit coupled to the non-volatile memory and being configured to compare a received reference time with the first finite time range specification and to disable the V-chip without user input if the reference time is outside the first finite time range specification, and to compare a received content-based indicator with the first content-based specification when the reference time falls within the first finite time range specification, the logic unit further configured to selectively generate one of a first and a

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second control signals in response to the comparison between the content-based indicator and the first content-based specification; and

a signal impairment mechanism coupled to the logic unit and configured for, based on the control signals, selectively passing a received program signal therethrough without substantial impairment or impairing the program signal.